Petru Loga

Transformed into the Image of Christ

Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. (Matthew 5:48)

Bucharest 2023

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. (Romans 8:29)

Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man **perfect** in Christ Jesus: Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily. (Colossians 1:28-29)

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But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. (2 Corinthians 3:18)

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Introduction

We come into the world, prepare for life, work, have children, grandchildren, enjoy this life more or less, and then it all ends at the grave. It seems that this is all life has to offer. Upon closer inspection, we can see that most people around the globe just consume this life and are not concerned with finding out if there is anything after death.

We believe that the most important thing in this short life we live is for each of us to know exactly God's plan for us humans, to know what purpose God had when He created man.

Through this booklet, we want to offer you an answer regarding the purpose of this life we live on earth. We hope that what is written will be a guide for those who believe in their hearts that God is the creator, both of the Universe and of us.

We observe that when we are asked to give an answer about what will be after this life is consumed and what we must do to live eternally in God's Kingdom, the vast majority of people live in total ignorance.

Due to ignorance, we can see today how many crowds of people are manipulated with various theories that explain how one can reach God's Kingdom.

One of them is the theory of purgatory. This theory, found in Catholicism, says that you can obtain forgiveness of sins through the payment of indulgences, which ensures your entry into God's Kingdom and implicitly eternal life.

In Orthodoxy, we find alms and prayers for the dead, then the tolls through which the deceased must pass, and many other things through which man hopes he can somehow buy forgiveness of sins.

The same situation is found in most evangelical, Protestant, and neo-Protestant churches. The general belief is that if we admire God for what He has done for us, if we believe in the sacrifice on the cross, if we confess our sins, if we have a form of godliness, we will obtain salvation which is reduced to the forgiveness of sins.

It seems that very few realize that repentance and faith in the sacrifice on the cross are just some of the things a person must do at the beginning of their life of faith. Lord Jesus warns us that the lack of knowledge of the Scriptures is one of the things that keeps man in this ignorance. (Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. Matthew 22:29)

Most of us stop at repentance, at the work on the cross... at the covenant in the water of baptism, at the forgiveness of sins. For many, the work of salvation stops here, without realizing that **God's plan** includes both the restoration and the **perfection** of man's character.

Almost no one believes that to be found worthy of the life that awaits us in His eternal Kingdom, we must grow to reach the measure of the stature

of the fullness of Christ. (And he gave some, apostles; and some...pastors and teachers; for the **perfecting of the saints**, till we all come...unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the **stature of the fullness of Christ**. Ephesians 4:11-13)

This plan of God was made in eternity, before man was created. The purpose of the heavenly Father was to make brothers of the Lord Jesus, and it is the most complex and grand plan ever devised.

Only forgiven of sins – Is this God's Plan?

In the following pages, we aim to thoroughly examine God's plan, about which, if we are honest, we must confess that we did not find out much when we began our spiritual searches.

Each of us, when we arrived at a church, received from them glasses with a doctrinal confessional filter with which to read the Bible. We studied the Bible with their glasses and they taught us what we must do to be saved.

Most of us were taught that God did everything for us, that through faith in the sacrifice on the cross, salvation is obtained, which is reduced to the forgiveness of sins. We were taught that it is not possible to reach the **perfection** of character during life, and salvation is reduced to the work done at the cross.

Thus, many were convinced that after being born again, God is somewhere far away and does not get too involved in a person's life. Many understand that the work of the Holy Spirit with man is limited to just a few external things, such as speaking a few words in another language, a few miracles, prophecies, without the Holy Spirit being directly involved in transforming the person to perfect their character.

We are left, therefore, to assume that God will perfect us through an unknown formula, which He will apply after a person's death.

And this is where most of us remain. We went to church, had our seat, confessed our sins, were baptized, sang, supported the teachings of the church we belong to, lived a more godly life, visited the sick, and thus we will enter God's Kingdom.

We were taught that we will not enter by what we will do, but because we obtained forgiveness of sins by grace, through faith in His sacrifice, because there is no man without sin.

However, to reach the heavenly Kingdom, to be saved, the standard of God's Kingdom has very strict requirements; we must reach the perfection required by the status of a citizen of heaven. (Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. Matthew 5:48)

Man must have a credible answer to these requirements of God. So the

question we must each ask ourselves is: Do we also have a part in the work of salvation?

Regarding this part of ours, the teaching of the Holy Scriptures shows us the entire plan of God which aims at the **perfection of man's character**. This plan includes, besides the forgiveness of sins, our growth as disciples in the school of Christ, until we all reach the measure of the stature of His fullness.

Shortly after the ascension of the Lord Jesus to heaven, besides the teaching of the Lord (**the doctrine of the perfection of man's character**), Satan came with a falsified doctrine (**the doctrine of the forgiveness of sins**), which offers salvation without costs on the part of man, limiting itself only to the forgiveness of sins.

The teaching of Scripture tells us that besides the forgiveness of sins through the sacrifice on the cross, we must also reach the perfection of our character, which requires the crucifixion of the flesh (putting off the old man) and the transformation of the person (putting on the new man made after the image of God).

To reach the measure of the stature of Christ, the Holy Scripture teaches us that man must fully trust in the Word of Christ, then must repent, deny himself, and make a discipleship covenant which aims for the disciple to become like his Teacher. (It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. Matthew 10:25)

It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master!

Any person, no matter how simple, understands that if someone were to reach the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, if they had His long patience, His love, His gentleness... they would have free entry into God's Kingdom. This is the only thing that can give us full confidence on the day of judgment.

Today there are very few people who accept and put into practice this doctrine of the perfection of man's character. (Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. Luke 13:23,24)

Upon closer inspection, we can easily notice that most choose to remain at the salvation which consists of the forgiveness of sins through faith in the sacrifice of the cross.

The doctrine of atonement or forgiveness of sins. Satan, through people subservient to him, brought a teaching that says God reduces salvation only to the forgiveness of sins because man cannot overcome sin. In this false doctrine, there are several offers through which you can be saved.

There is a first teaching, specific to the early centuries but which is very current even now. It is a cheap offer, with which Satan comes to the ignorant man who does

not know either the Scriptures or God's requirements. This teaching assures man that salvation is reduced only to the forgiveness of sins and is obtained through the payment of indulgences, alms, rituals. (we find here Catholicism and Orthodoxy)

The sinful man who does not know the Word of God easily accepts this offer because it allows him to live his life in the flesh and assures him a cheap formula through which he can obtain salvation.

Another teaching, also cheap, assures man that salvation is obtained "by faith alone" the price for the forgiveness of unconquered sins (past, present, and future) being paid by Lord Jesus. (we find here Protestant confessions, see the reformation of Luther, Calvin...)

This offer of Satan assures man that the perfection of character during this life is not possible and gives him a cheap formula through which to obtain salvation. Believe in the sacrifice on the cross and obtain salvation which is reduced again to the forgiveness of sins. (Lord Jesus paid it)

There is a third teaching, specific to the last centuries, which is closer to God's plan. It addresses those who are not satisfied with these cheap offers and who seek more.

This teaching says that salvation can be obtained through faith in the sacrifice on the cross and through repentance, followed by partial sanctification, without having as an objective self-denial, discipleship, and reaching the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. (we find here the neo-Protestant movement)

We find in this doctrine, besides being born again, a life of sanctification, but without victory over sin, the general belief being in this teaching as well that the perfection of character is not possible in this life.

It can be easily observed that repentance, followed by incomplete sanctification, (a form of godliness) without self-denial, which still leaves room for living in the flesh which does not have a real finalization, cannot bring man to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Incomplete sanctification does not bring a person to the stature of the fullness of Christ!

It is the case of the person who still keeps things from the flesh; anger, idle words, greed, working under the table, defamation, going to the beach, wasting time on Facebook, YouTube...

It is quite clear that the person who embraces this teaching in which there remain unconquered sins, is forced to remain at the doctrine of the forgiveness of sins. This implies that perfection is to be done by God through an unknown formula, at the moment of death or at the resurrection.

We can notice that Satan, to deceive the person who does not make salvation the target of diligent research, used besides alms, indulgences... also the sacrifice

of the cross, offering people salvation without too high costs on their part.

To not be deceived, it is very important to research what the role of the sacrifice on the cross is, to know what place the Lord's sacrifice has in the plan of salvation.

The sacrifice on the cross – Its role in the plan of salvation

The sacrifice on the cross is part of God's plan and has a well-defined place. We cannot diminish the importance of the sacrifice on the cross because without it man cannot reach salvation.

God's plan includes the restoration of the sinful man which includes cleansing from sins through the sacrifice on the cross. However, God's plan is much more complex and does not limit itself only to the cleansing of sins through the sacrifice on the cross, but also considers the perfection of our character. We believe it is very clear to everyone that the sinful man could not pay the price of redemption through his good deeds. (Ephesians 2:9)

Someone without sin had to die for this and that was Lord Jesus. (... holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners. Hebrews 7:26) Scripture tells us that to be freed from the dominion of the devil, to be cleansed from sins, to be reconciled with God, to be redeemed, and to make possible the new birth and transfer into His Kingdom, the Son of God accepted to die on the cross. (... to give his life a ransom for many. Matthew 20:28)

The work on the cross is God's gift for any person who repents of their evil deeds, who denies themselves, and trusts in Him. Man cannot come with his deeds to obtain forgiveness of sins. (For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. Ephesians 2:8-9) The sacrifice on the cross makes possible the forgiveness of sins and redemption. (Who... hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins. Colossians 1:13)

The sacrifice of Lord Jesus does this to put us in a new state, in which He can work with us through the Holy Spirit for our restoration and sanctification. (... sanctification of the Spirit. 1 Peter 1:2; Changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. 2 Corinthians 3:18)

The sacrifice on the cross makes possible entry into the school of Christ and is the beginning of discipleship for anyone who decides to deny themselves and enter into a covenant with the Lord. Being in the process of change until we reach the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, sins committed accidentally,

without will, are cleansed by the blood of the Lord. (But if we walk in the light... we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us... 1 John 1:7)

The sacrifice of the Lord will be of no use to us if after being born again, after entering into the new covenant we sin willfully. (For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins. Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? Hebrews 10:26, 29)

God's plan - Restoring His image in man

To know the things that are provided in God's plan, we must research the purpose the Lord had when He created man.

From reading Scripture, we can see that in His eternal plan, God had in mind not just creating beings superior to angels, but His purpose was to make a being in which His nature would manifest; which would be in His image and likeness. He created a being completely different from anything He had created until then. (And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him. Genesis 1:26-27)

We can affirm with certainty that when God created man, He had a totally different purpose than that concerning angels, who were created with the status of servants. God decided to make brothers of Lord Jesus, to populate His Kingdom with beings that would be like His Son. (For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Romans 8:28-29)

We have a soul, spirit, He endowed us with the ability to think, to reason, to believe, to make decisions, to admire, to love, and to choose. This is because He decided beforehand in His plan for us to be like Him.

However, He did not limit Himself to this resemblance. God created us and endowed us with these abilities to use them, and it is our responsibility to value them, to work together with Him, to reach the stature determined by Him. God's plan does not limit itself to a cheap salvation, which stands only in repentance (**putting off the old man**) and in the forgiveness of sins, but includes the **restoration of God's image** in us (**putting on the new man**) and bringing us to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. (Ephesians 4:13)

This is the highest thing to which man can aspire. (And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Ephesians

4:24)

If the first man was deceived by Satan and his sin passed upon all, this does not mean that a mistake crept into God's plan. All things happened as was foreseen in this plan made in eternity, which God put together with great attention to the smallest details.

God begins this work of restoring the image of Christ in man at the moment of being born again and has all the power to bring us to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. (Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Philippians 1:6)

To illustrate this, we can think of the construction of a car in a modern robotic factory, where the manufacturer has a starting point on the production line where the first part is placed. At the end of the manufacturing process, the car appears, worked and finished down to the smallest detail.

So it is in God's factory; He begins this work of restoring His image in man and completes it down to the smallest details.

If a man created by God can finish what he starts, how much more can God. God has the most advanced factory where He works together with every person who responds to His call.

He gives us new birth and transforms us step by step into His image until we reach the fullness of the stature of His Son. (But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. 2 Corinthians 3:18)

It is a perfect plan, drawn up with great precision, point by point, without missing the smallest detail. What He begins, He brings to completion. (Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 1:8)

In God's plan, it is foreseen that Lord Jesus will have many brothers who will be like Him. All things that appear in our lives are foreseen by God to work on our character until we come to resemble Lord Jesus. (And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Romans 8:28)

Our life on this earth, everything we do from morning to evening, must be subordinated to this great project of God. (If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. Colossians 3:1)

If we do not do this, if we live this life in the flesh to enjoy it, we have not understood God's work with man and will only limit ourselves to Satan's offer, which offers us a cheap salvation consisting only of the forgiveness of sins. (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that

they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things. Philippians 3:18)

God, in His eternal plan, has decided to make us His children, to grow and reach the fullness of the stature of Christ. (Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, **we shall be like him**. 1 John 3:1)

We warn those who do not carefully study the Holy Scripture, who do not understand that they must reach this status and are content only with the forgiveness of sins, that on that great day, they will have a great surprise, for in the Kingdom of God, Lord Jesus will be only with those who have prepared and reached the fullness of His stature!

Many think that this standard is too high for us, but this is our calling. The true God calls us to rise from the corruption of this world, to come to have the image of Christ, for only then will we be able to dwell with Him.

The perfection of man in God's plan

To accomplish this extraordinary plan of making beings in His image and to bring them to the perfection required by the status of His sons, God made the heavens and the earth, and man received a body from the dust of the earth. (For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord; and there is none else. Isaiah 45:18)

God did not choose the heavenly Kingdom as a dwelling place for man, as was the case with the angels, but made the earth with all that is on it, this being the place that meets all the conditions to bring man to the perfection required by Him. It is a place that is not free from dangers, as the devil and his angels were cast to the earth.

There are a few questions we can ask ourselves, which have answers hidden from the inattentive eye: Why, when God created man, did He not place him directly in His presence, as the angels were placed? Why did He place him in a place where he was in danger of being influenced by the devil and his angels?

Why did God have to cast Satan to the earth and not elsewhere? Why did He allow him to tempt man? Why did man, in his state of innocence, have to be such an easy prey for Satan and end up in this lowly situation in which billions of people find themselves today?

We must observe that God's plan was perfect, without mistakes, a plan that He is now fulfilling. (He is the Rock, his work is perfect. Deuteronomy 32:4)

Upon a closer reading of the Bible, we can easily notice that, in His perfect plan, the fall of man was foreseen. (According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world... having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ. Ephesians 1:4) We can also notice that in His plan, both the restoration of man (new birth) and his perfection were foreseen.

Thus, God created the perfect framework for man, living on earth in the presence of Satan, to be passed through various trials without which he cannot reach the stature required by the Kingdom of God. (Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. Romans 12:21)

Man, the being created as the crown of His creation, in His image and likeness, was placed to dwell in this visible world (the universe seen with our eyes) in the presence of Satan. This was not a mistake on God's part, but this was carefully foreseen in His eternal plan.

God created this visible universe, the earth, and all the constellations of the sky, to fulfill His purpose with people, to bring them to the stature of Lord Jesus, His Firstborn, to the perfection of our character.

It is the ideal place for man to be raised, tested, proven, and brought to the perfection required by God. It is amazing to see how perfect His plan is.

We can see that Lord Jesus was also made perfect through the things He was tempted by Satan and overcame. Lord Jesus was made perfect through the suffering that came from Satan and which He overcame through the death on the cross. (For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. Hebrews 2:10)

When we look at the life of the natural man, we observe that no man is born perfect; perfection is obtained only through tenacious work, persevering, copying the one who teaches us in all details. (see the path a pianist takes to become perfect at the piano).

The perfection of our character is obtained only through work; it is not a state we are born with or that will be offered to us after we die.

We can observe that in no field of practical life can one reach perfection just by studying, without practicing what one studies. Much less can one reach the perfection required by the status of a son of God through a mental, passive faith, which in Scripture is likened to the faith of demons. (Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? James 2:19, 20)

When the rich young man asked Lord Jesus what he should do to inherit eternal life, we see that the Lord Jesus answers his question and conditions the inheritance of eternal life on the status of perfection he must reach.

Lord Jesus answered him firmly: "If thou wilt be perfect... come and follow

me." (Matthew 19:21) That is, leave the concerns of life, come and live as I live, learn from Me, follow Me in all things, and you will become perfect and thus inherit eternal life.

You cannot become perfect at the piano just by theoretical study of the scores, without copying the teacher and without giving much of your life to practical exercise. Likewise, our faith can become perfect only by practicing, through the works of faith. (Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect. James 2:22)

In spiritual matters, to perfect your character, to become perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect, you must believe it is possible, then you must work, imitating or copying the Teacher in everything He does, and give time from your life living practically in His teachings, down to the smallest detail. (think about how many hours a day a pianist works to become perfect)

But to reach the fullness of the stature of Christ, a disciple's work must be done, copying the Teacher. Only in this way can one reach the status of perfection required by the standard of the Kingdom of God.

The perfection required by God is not in music, in painting, but in long-suffering, in kindness, in gentleness, in love... and this is obtained only by following the school of Christ, imitating Him.

God's work is not completed except as it was with Lord Jesus, through victory over the trials that come upon us. (My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire. James 1:2-4)

The perfection of our character is not obtained through faith in the sacrifice of the cross but through real work and struggle in the temptations that come from Satan and are allowed by God for our growth.

For man to overcome these trials, he has God as a partner, who is faithful and will not allow a trial greater than his strength to come upon him. (God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. 1 Corinthians 10:13)

It can be easily observed that the traits of Lord Jesus, namely love, gentleness, long-suffering, kindness... can only be obtained through work, through perseverance... having Lord Jesus as a model. (Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart. Matthew 11:29)

Long-suffering can only be obtained by learning from Christ!

No man, when he is born again, is born with long-suffering, with gentleness, with love. These qualities can be obtained through man's work in collaboration with God. For this, we have at our disposal the school of Christ, in which we find the Word that works with us, the Holy Spirit that urges and guides us, the Body of Christ (the Church), and our work in full obedience.

The modeling of God's image in us

What an extraordinary plan God could make! What grace we have to be able to work in His workshop as apprentices, together with Him, to grow in all respects until we reach the fullness of the stature of Christ.

Because His plan is for us to be like the image of His Son, and everything is subordinated to this great plan, God sent His Son. In turn, He sent His disciples to describe His character to us, because only if we know His traits can we model ourselves after His image. (For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate... to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Romans 8:28-29)

Just as no sculptor in the world, no matter how talented, can sculpt the image of a man if he does not see his features, so no one will be able to work to have the image of Christ if he does not know the features of His image.

No one in this world can conceive that a sculptor can reproduce the image of Nero if he has never seen Nero.

A sculptor who makes a sculpture always has as a model the image of the one he will reproduce in stone. He has the image of the model in his workshop, which he must look at and reproduce with great attention every feature until the stone takes on the image of the model.

Similar is God's work with us. From the moment of new birth, the Holy Spirit, like a sculptor, is the One who works with us and transforms us step by step until Christ is formed in us.

At first, His image will be found in the seed of God that is sown in us, having the genetic code of God. The Holy Spirit germinates this divine seed and works with us on this transformation.

For this, He provides us with the model, that is, the image of the Lord, which we can look at as in a mirror, as the Holy Scripture tells us. Then we work under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, step by step, until we come to have the image of Christ; until all His traits are imprinted in our hearts.

We all look as in a mirror in which we see all the features of the Lord, and we will polish until there are no more differences between us and our Model. (But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the

Lord. 2 Corinthians 3:18)

The external image of the Lord cannot be seen, but the internal image can be seen, what His heart looks like, what is in His heart, and this we can see with the eyes of our heart. (The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened. Ephesians 1:17-18).

We are changed from glory to glory into the image of Christ!

There is an inner part of the heart, in which we can resemble God and which can only be seen with the eyes of the heart, but it is ignored by most. (For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. Matthew 13:15)

When Moses wanted to know Him, he did not ask to see His external appearance, but he asked to be shown His ways, His way of being, that is, the traits of His heart. (Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee. Exodus 33:13)

Therefore, God revealed to him the hidden face of His heart, that is, the attributes or traits of His heart. (The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth. Exodus 34:6; The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy. Psalms 145:8; God is love. 1 John 4:16; He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he. Deuteronomy 32:4)

When God tells us that His image must be formed in us, He is actually telling us that our heart must change to be like His heart, His attributes/traits of His heartmust be imprinted in us.

When we look with the eyes of the heart, we must see as in a mirror the traits of His heart and we must allow ourselves to be worked on and modeled after these traits of His, so that at the end of the Spirit's work, our heart must be like His. (The Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart. 1 Samuel 13:14)

He works on restoring His image in us and guides us through the Holy Spirit to clothe us with His attributes, which will be the fruit of the Spirit's work with us. (Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering. Colossians 3:12)

In the Gospel, we find the traits of the heart of Lord Jesus, with which He draws all people to Him. (And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. John 12:32)

However, we can observe that for most, Satan has blinded the eyes of their hearts so that they do not see the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, to not see in the mirror the Model after which to change. (But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. 2 Corinthians 4:3)

Many of us do not have eyes to see the image of Christ and remain only with the knowledge of a few things about what Lord Jesus did.

Many know what healings Lord Jesus performed, know about His sacrifice on the cross, where He walked, what miracles He performed, when He prayed, where He prayed, and that is where things concerning Lord Jesus are limited, but what is essential and what they need to know for their salvation, they do not know.

We must understand that we will not be able to become like Him/be like Him if we do not seek to discover the beauty of the traits of His heart (His ways) and without desiring to have a heart like His. (Shew me now thy way, that I may know thee. Exodus 33:13)

The question we should each ask ourselves is the following: What can determine me to look in the mirror and work together with the Holy Spirit for the image of the Lord to be formed in me? Is there something specific? Is it the fear of hell? Is it the promise that He will take us to the heavenly Paradise? Or is it the beauty of His heart?

Attracted by the beauty of His heart

We can easily notice that in an election campaign for choosing a candidate, those who promote him present him in the most shining postures to convince people to choose him. The candidate prepares speeches with the most convincing offers to determine as many people as possible to choose him.

This is done because we were created with discernment, with the ability to choose. When we admire greatly, the desire to act, to make decisions, is triggered in us.

No candidate in an election campaign will call us to choose him using threats, because no one will appreciate him and choose him. If a person is attracted by the offers of a candidate who is very convincing and considers him sincere in what he promises, he will act accordingly, appreciate him, and choose him over others.

If, in addition to the offers he makes, this candidate has a beautiful way of life, even if he does not call anyone to imitate his way of life, there will still be some people who, out of admiration, will want to imitate him.

This is how we were created, with this capacity. When we are attracted to someone and admire them, we are willing to support them, and when we admire them with all

our heart, there will be among us people who will want to resemble that person. We can see these desires to imitate, to resemble some music or cinema stars, in clothing, speech, among young people...

For people to choose the one who is running, he promises them various advantages, without asking them to resemble him and live like him.

When it comes to the salvation of the soul, things happen similarly. God uses His messengers to present His plan regarding our life, with the purpose of convincing us to choose His offer of salvation.

Lord Jesus, besides promising us eternal life, asks us to resemble Him, to walk with Him on His ways, living a perfect life.

He calls us not only to appreciate Him for what He has done for us but to be like Him. He calls us to fall in love with Him, and for this, He shows us the beauty of His perfect character (And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. John 12:32).

God does not call us to appreciate Him just because He offers us an eternal Kingdom with streets of gold or because He saves us from hell, as this will not make us fall in love with Him or desire to follow Him to be like Him.

The Lord does not want us to be engaged to Him out of interest; He does not promise us gifts to convince us to love Him because this would trigger opportunism in us, not true love. We notice that even those in the world disapprove of opportunism or "love" based on another interest, not the beauty and qualities of the beloved..

Only if we are overwhelmed by His beauty will we desire to walk in His ways and have this beauty that He possesses. (The mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Psalms 50:1, 2).

Therefore, in His love for the crown of His creation, God uses His messengers to speak to us about Lord Jesus, to show us the traits of His heart. His disciples are sent to describe the image of God to us, to show us the beauty of His heart, and to draw us to Him with His perfect beauty.

No one can be drawn to His beauty if they have not heard of Him and if they do not see His heart's traits, if they do not know His ways, His manner of being. (And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? Romans 10:14; No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him. John 6:44)

If we are drawn by the beauty of His perfect character, we will admire and love Him with all our heart; only then will the desire to have the same character traits as He has be stirred in us. (I charge you, O daughters of

If we admire and love Him, the desire to have His traits will awaken in us!

Jerusalem, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please. Song of Solomon 8:4)

If we have been called only to repentance to avoid hell and to walk on streets of gold, without being shown the beauty of the Lord's heart, if we have not been presented with the fact that His purpose is for us to have His character traits, we must be careful because those who presented this message to us brought us a false, incomplete gospel. They were not sent by God. If we have received such an opportunistic gospel, we have been deceived by Satan.

Let us honestly recognize: What gospel was brought to us? Were there people who preached to us only that if we do not repent, we will face eternal hell?

Did they teach us to appreciate Him, to be thankful only for what He did for us on the cross? Or were there messengers of God who also presented us with the beauty of the Lord's heart? Was I drawn to His character traits? Did love awaken in us, and did we desire to have the same beautiful traits as He has?

God draws us with all His beauty and will make all the beauty of His heart pass before us. Just as He showed Moses the beauty of His heart, so will He show it to us. He will make all His beauty pass before you. (Exodus 33:17). He does this so that we may fall in love with the traits of His heart, so that love may awaken in us.

David's fervent desire (which should be that of every lover of the Lord) was to dwell all his life in the house of the Lord to behold the beauty of the Lord. (One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord. Psalms 27:4)

If we come to God out of interest, out of opportunism, for the streets of gold, to avoid punishment in hell, it is clear that we have not experienced the shining beauty of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. (But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. 2 Corinthians 4:3-4)

Every teaching (commandment) in the Gospel has hidden within it a trait of the Lord Jesus, concealing within it the perfect beauty of His character. By looking at His ways, at His commandments, we are actually looking at the beauty of Christ, who is the image of God.

Each commandment has hidden within it a trait of His!

His commandments should be a delight to us because they represent Him. (And I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved. Psalms 119:47; Thy commandments are my delights. Psalms 119:143)

Therefore, Lord Jesus says: "If ye love me, keep my commandments..." (John 14:15), meaning if you love Me, you also love My commandments and find delight in them because My commandments express My character, they show what I am like.

No one will be able to admire and love Him with all their heart out of fear of eternal hell, but only if they are drawn by the radiance of the Lord, by the radiance of His Word. Only in this way is the fervent desire to be like Him triggered. Only in this way can the purpose for which we were created be achieved, that of being like Lord Jesus, our Bridegroom.

Only when we are truly drawn by the beauty of the Lord's heart will we be determined to imitate Him and desire to have the same heart as His.

If someone shows us the beauty of the Lord and we are drawn to Him, the result will be love. Illustratively, our relationship should resemble the relationship of two betrothed, who are drawn to each other, where there is wholehearted love.

If we admire and are drawn to the beauty of the traits of Lord Jesus, we will desire them for ourselves, this being the starting point. (I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him, that I am sick of love. Song of Solomon 5:8)

A person in love will always delight in the words spoken by the one they admire and love. (I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone: my soul failed when he spake. Song of Solomon 5:6; My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times. Psalms 119:20)

If we have not started from here, if we are not drawn by the beauty of His heart, if His commandments and ways are not our delight, if we have loved Him only for His promises, then the new life has not begun. (No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him. John 6:44)

His wife has made herself ready

In our relationship with Lord Jesus, Scripture sees us in several roles. We are seen as disciples, as servants, as brothers of the Lord, and as His bride. He is our Bridegroom, and we are His bride! Let us ask ourselves: What relationship should there be between two betrothed? (For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. 2 Corinthians 11:2)

It is clear that our relationship with the Lord must be one of admiration, of love. The Word of the Lord often speaks of the fact that Lord Jesus will be our Bridegroom and that we will be His bride (wife). (Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. Revelation 21:9). The Lord loves me, and in His love, He calls me to enter into a relationship of love, of betrothal with Him.

Only if love awakens in us for the One who is more beautiful than anything that exists in heaven and on earth, only then does the Lord enter into a relationship with us. (I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please. Song of Solomon 8:4)

He comes to me and shows me His beauty, the beauty of His ways, and has long patience for me until love awakens in me for Him and His ways. When this happens on my part, He enters into a relationship with me by making a covenant of love to be His.

It is not a covenant that the Lord forces me to make out of fear of eternal hell (as most do today) but a covenant based on love because I have come to love Him more than anything. (Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I sware unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine. Ezekiel 16:8)

God knows the heart of man. He knows when we are drawn by His beauty, knows when there is admiration, when love comes from the whole heart, and when my heart is ready to follow Him. Only then does He make a covenant of betrothal with me. (He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him... John 14:21)

The beauty of the heart of Lord Jesus must awaken in us what it awakened in the Shulamite, the beauty of her beloved, so that a fervent desire to love Him with all our heart, with all our strength, with all our mind is born in us. (What is thy beloved more than another beloved, O thou fairest among women? My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand. His head is as the most fine gold... This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem. Song of Solomon 5:9-16)

It is like a betrothal relationship between a young man and a young woman, which can only be entered into due to mutual admiration, due to wholehearted love. Fear of hell or the offers of heaven are excluded. He will not enter into this love relationship with us if our time of love has not come, if we do not love Him more than mother or father, if we do not love Him more than anyone in this world. (He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. Matthew 10:37)

This must be the sole purpose of our lives, to live this love relationship and to prepare ourselves as a bride for our wedding with the Bridegroom. (The marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. Revelation 19:7)

We have been called to dwell together with our Bridegroom and His Father! Because He obeyed the Father in all things, His wife must also obey Him in all things. Only then will the Father and the Son dwell together with me. (If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and w**e will come unto him, and make our abode with him**. John 14:23)

His wife has made herself ready, has become like Him. Now she is a bride, she is in the school of her Bridegroom, walks in His righteous ways, and learns to

be godly towards Him, to obey Him, just as He obeyed the Father. Through the trials she goes through, she reaches the stature of her husband. She will be made perfect, just as her Bridegroom was made perfect. If He was made perfect, she must also be made perfect!

Let us ask ourselves: Could there be harmony in the Kingdom of God if the Son obeys the Father exactly, but His wife does not obey in the same way? Would it be possible?

The beauty of Lord Jesus

It is essential to know the traits of the Lord's heart, His manner of being, His ways, the perfect beauty that the Lord Jesus possesses. (To know... Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Colossians 2:2)

It is vital to know His heart because we will have to resemble Him, because we will have to grow until we reach the stature of His fullness.

In God's plan, which was made before man existed, it was foreseen that His Son would come to earth to show us His perfect ways. (Good and upright is the Lord: therefore will he teach sinners in the way. Psalms 25:8; As for God, his way is perfect. Psalms 18:30)

He revealed His perfect beauty with which He draws us to Him, to fall in love with Him and desire to be like Him. (And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. John 12:32)

However, the beauty of the Lord's heart and the path He walked is hidden from the eyes of most people. (Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. Matthew 7:14)

The one whom Christians admire today is another Jesus. Today, another Jesus and another way are preached, which most easily accept. (There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. Proverbs 16:25)

It is another Jesus, who they believe rejoices that people celebrate His birthday, a Jesus who would watch the news, soap operas, waste time on the internet, on Facebook, go to the sea to relax, drive without caring about traffic laws, work illegally... go to the army, take an oath, get angry... (For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or another gospel... ye might well bear with him. 2 Corinthians 11:4)

The true Jesus is the one we find described by the Holy Scripture. He walked the narrow path, the path He calls us to walk. (If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. Matthew 16:24)

In His relationship with the Father, He denied Himself, was humble, made

Himself a servant obedient unto death, was godly, loved the heavenly Father with all His heart.

The true Jesus was long-suffering when mocked, was full of kindness towards those who crucified Him, was full of gentleness, loved His enemies. (Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously. 1 Peter 2:23)

The true Jesus loved righteousness and hated iniquity. He did not joke, did not laugh at others' jokes, did not use idle words, did not argue with anyone.

He did not live in the flesh for a moment. This Jesus calls us to crucify the flesh and live as He lived.

We must live as Jesus lived!

Most of us have been taught to look admiringly at everything Lord Jesus did, at His manner of being. We have been deceived that we cannot have His righteousness, His long-suffering, His gentleness...

We are taught that Lord Jesus lived at a divine standard, inaccessible to humans, and that for this reason, earthly weaknesses are allowed for us. We are deceived that salvation lies only in the forgiveness of sins through the sacrifice on the cross and that at the resurrection, His righteousness will be attributed to us.

If we want to find out how Lord Jesus lived, only things that are not within the reach of the simple man are highlighted. We are shown that He walked on water, fed five thousand people with just five loaves and two fish, raised people from the dead, rebuked the wind... We could say that He did things that no ordinary person can do.

Satan deceives us through people subservient to him that no one can live like Lord Jesus and that this call is not for us. However, the Word of Scripture tells us categorically that we must live as Lord Jesus lived. It is a command that must be fulfilled by each of us. (He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked. 1 John 2:6)

The Lord does not call us to multiply loaves, nor to walk on water, nor to raise the dead or other miraculous things. We are not called to resemble Him in these things, but to live as He lived.

We must live in those things in which He lived and which are within the power of any person, things in which each of us can and must live as Lord Jesus lived; both the newborn and the mature in faith.

These are things to which man does not give importance, but which Lord Jesus lived in His relationship with the heavenly Father. These things must be practiced by all of us, from small to great, being strictly necessary for us to reach

the stature of the fullness of Christ. The self-denial, humility, godliness, righteousness... in which He lived express the beauty of His character. For these things, people despised Him and did not pay attention to Him. (And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light. John 3:19)

We are called to be full of admiration for His manner of being, to be drawn by the beauty of the Lord Jesus' heart. But we must also work to transform our hearts after His heart, to deny ourselves, to be humble, godly, to make ourselves servants as He made Himself, to be long-suffering when mocked, to be full of kindness towards those who persecute us, to be full of gentleness...

If we find delight in these things and put them into practice, through them we will grow step by step until we reach the perfection of our character.

In His relationship with the heavenly Father, "the true Jesus" denied Himself, was humble, made Himself a servant obedient unto death, the fear of the Lord was His delight, was godly, and loved the heavenly Father with all His heart.

There are multitudes of people who appreciate Him because He fed them, because He healed them, but for the way He lived in His relationship with His Father, they are not interested in knowing or living as He lived. Because Satan has deceived us that it is impossible to live as He lived, these aspects of the Lord's life are not paid attention to by most of us.

However, it is easy to observe that in these things in which He lived, we are also required to live. If we live as He lived, we will grow until we reach the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Self-denial

According to the dictionary: renunciation of personal interests or ideas. In His relationship with the heavenly Father, Lord Jesus emptied Himself. (Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant. Philippians 2:6-8)

Self-denial involves giving up your interests, giving up your own opinions, your own will, giving up a reply.

Although He was the Son of God, Lord Jesus did not have His own opinions, did not do what He wanted, but completely subjected His will to God.

The definition of self-denial is found in the life that Lord Jesus lived in His relationship with the heavenly Father. If we do not have this image of self-denial that Lord Jesus practiced, we will not know what true self-denial means. (Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. John 5:19)

The Lord Jesus chose the 12 disciples after a night of prayer with the Father.

But none were chosen by Him but by the heavenly Father. (While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. John 17:12)

He did not work according to His thoughts, but remained in obedience and did everything the heavenly Father told Him to do. When He washed the disciples' feet, when He was the servant of all, when He fed the multitudes, He was in complete obedience to what the heavenly Father told Him to do.

He performed many healings, but not a single healing was done on His own initiative; all were done according to what the Father told Him to do. (I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me. John 5:30).

This is the recipe for self-denial. If we admire Him for the way He lived, we will adopt it and practice it identically as He practiced it.

Lord Jesus shows us how He lived on earth, revealing this trait of His heart, which is of perfect beauty. He draws us with this beautiful trait, so that we may desire with all our hearts to have it too.

We have been called to live as He lived, to deny ourselves as He denied Himself. This is the true life to which we have been called, for the new life cannot begin without self-denial.

Self-denial is the first requirement of Lord Jesus that anyone who wants to begin the new life must fulfill. (If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. Luke 9:23)

It can be easily observed that self-denial is part of the plan of salvation, without which there is no new birth. This is how He lived, He denied Himself, He, our Bridegroom, and He asks us to do the same.

Check yourself! Have you denied yourself, have you given up human values? Have you fully accepted the teachings of Christ? Have all things become new? (Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. 2 Corinthians 5:17)

The devil has come to deceive people with certain parts of the Holy Scripture to show us that it is not possible to live as Lord Jesus lived. But it is possible, and it is mandatory for salvation! (And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. Matthew 10:38)

This is how Lord Jesus lived, and this is how we must live too. We can easily notice by looking around us that self-denial is one of the most despised and ignored things. Let us ask ourselves: Do we appreciate and desire to live in self-denial as Lord Jesus lived?

Humility

Humility, defined by the dictionary as a humble, **obedient**, and respectful attitude. In His relationship with the Heavenly Father, Lord Jesus demonstrated

profound humility. It is another character trait of Lord Jesus, of a shining beauty that draws us to Him. It is something that expresses the beauty of the character of Lord Jesus, which we must fall in love with to desire to be humble just as He was. (Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. Matthew 11:29)

We are called to live as He lived, to live humbly as Lord Jesus lived, a life that is despised and ignored by most Christians today.

Lord Jesus is the model of humility for us. In His relationship with the Heavenly Father, He demonstrated such profound humility that His judgment was taken away. (In his humiliation his judgment was taken away. Acts 8:33)

To this humility, in which our judgment is taken away, we are also called. If we are honest with ourselves, we must admit that it is a difficult call and one that is despised by most. (And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death. Philippians 2:8)

The attitude of humility and absolute submission is highlighted by the fact that He judged only as He heard from the Father, without seeking to do His own will, but only the will of God, this is how Lord Jesus lived. (I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me. John 5:30)

He demonstrated such profound humility that He became obedient unto death. (Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously. 1 Peter 2:23)

Let us ask ourselves: Do we love this Jesus who has such a humble behavior towards His Father? Do we love this Jesus who submitted to the Father in all things? Would we like to be the wife of such a Man, who has no opinions of His own but does only what His Father tells Him? Do we love this character trait with all our hearts so much that we desire to be like Him, to live as He lived? (Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God. 1 Peter 5:6)

Check yourself! Do you live humbly in your relationship with God? Are you humble and submissive in all things as Lord Jesus lived?

Godliness

Godliness, defined in the dictionary as an attitude of **admiration, deep respect, and strict obedience**

Another character trait of the Lord Jesus, which is of perfect beauty, is **godliness**. The Word of Scripture tells us that the Lord Jesus was heard by the Heavenly Father because of His godliness. (Hebrews 5:7)

Lord Jesus admired and loved the Heavenly Father with all His heart and strictly kept all His Word, this is true godliness. We are also called to this, to have the godliness that Lord Jesus had, not just a form of godliness. (The Son can do

nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. John 5:19)

We must understand that only if we come to live in full obedience to the laws of the Kingdom, which are flawless/perfect, as Lord Jesus lived, can we reach the perfection of our character.

Lord Jesus came to earth to teach us godliness, which is admiration and strict obedience. (If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to **godliness**; he is proud, knowing nothing. 1 Timothy 6:3-4)

We must learn to be godly as Lord Jesus was, so that in the end we may be found obedient in all things as Lord Jesus obeyed the Father.

An example of obedience can be seen in Abraham when he was asked to sacrifice his son Isaac. He did not grumble, he did not negotiate, but he fulfilled exactly as he was commanded. (And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God. Genesis 22:12)

All people will have to go through the examination of godliness to be tested and found worthy or unworthy of the Kingdom of God. The status of a citizen of the Kingdom of God obliges everyone to godliness, obliges admiration and strict adherence to His commandments. (For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, **having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come**. 1 Timothy 4:8)

Only he who reaches this godliness, of full, unwavering obedience, the obedience that characterized Lord Jesus and which is the opposite of Adam's disobedience, will be found worthy to dwell eternally in the Land above.

We cannot live our whole life in a form of godliness and believe that in the end, by invoking mercy, we will be received into God's paradise. (For men shall be lovers of their own selves... having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. 2 Timothy 3:2-5)

Check yourself! Do you admire the godliness that Lord Jesus had so much that you desire to be godly like Him?

He took the form of a servant

According to the dictionary: slave, servant = A person deprived of any rights, in the full possession of a master...; A person who blindly and servilely satisfies the will of another.

Lord Jesus is the Son of God, but when He came down to earth, out of His great love for the Heavenly Father, He offered Himself as a servant to God.

This is how Lord Jesus lived His whole life on this earth and calls us to have this mind in us which was also in Him. (Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it notrobbery to be equal

with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant. Philippians 2:5,7)

This was Lord Jesus. Let us think of a servant, a slave who is at his master. He has no right to decide what to do in the master's yard. He enters the master and is a slave who does only what the master says.

Slave = a person who blindly and servilely satisfies the will of another!

He is the Son of God and we appreciate Him for this, but to appreciate someone who offers himself as a servant and who calls us to do the same humiliating thing, not many accept this.

Lord Jesus did nothing of Himself, absolutely nothing. This mind was in the Lord Jesus and He asks us to have it too.

Though He was in the form of God, though He was the Son of God, He did not consider it at hand to be equal with God. He made Himself of no reputation, took the form of a servant, and became obedient unto death.

Lord Jesus admired and loved the Heavenly Father so much that He kept the Word of God as a servant. We are also called to this; to keep the Word of Christ as a servant to his master.

It is one of the most despised things, it is the lowest position to offer yourself as a servant to someone, to no longer do whatever you want. It is insignificant, it is despised. Yet we are called to this. (But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. Romans 6:22)

Once you have offered yourselves as servants to God... God does not enter into a relationship with us as partners. He does not want us to just bring Him our sacrifices (gifts) and thus buy our place in His eternal Kingdom. No, He wants us to love Him so much that we offer ourselves as servants willingly. (Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened. Psalms 40:6)

Servants of Christ, to this we have been called, to live as He lived. (He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked. 1 John 2:6) This is how the disciples of the Lord lived, this is how we must live as servants of Christ. (Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ. Romans 1:1; Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ. 2 Peter 1:1)

Only if we find in Him the embodiment of perfect beauty, the pearl of great price, only then will we love Him with all our heart, with all our mind, only then will the desire to be like Him be triggered in us, to deny ourselves, the desire to **offer ourselves as servants** and to learn only from Him.

Only love with all the heart and with all the mind is what determines me to offer myself as a servant willingly, not forced by anyone. Only this obedience of a servant to the master can result in the building of the image of the Lord step by

step in all details.

Only when His ordinances are my delight, only then will I deny myself and offer myself as a servant to Him willingly. (I will delight myself in thy statutes. Psalms 119:16; Thy law is within my heart. Psalms 40:8)

Only when His words are a delight to us, only then do we build in obedience to all the details brought to us by the Holy Spirit, only then will we be truly transformed. The Spirit changes us from beauty to beauty after the image of the Lord only if we fully obey Him, down to the smallest details. (Behold, I have longed after thy precepts: quicken me in thy righteousness. Psalms 119:40)

You cannot become a servant of Christ until the old man dies, until you are determined to obey in all things. (It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him. 2 Timothy 2:11)

Our model, which we must imitate in all aspects, is Lord Jesus. He admired and loved the Father so much that He willingly became a servant, obedient in everything. He became a servant willingly because both the ordinances and the commandments of the Father were His delight. (Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant. Philippians 2:5,7)

Only those who are attracted by His traits and offer themselves as servants willingly have holiness as their fruit and eternal life as their end. (But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. Romans 6:22)

The one who becomes a servant of Christ has sanctification as their fruit and eternal life as their end.

It is essential to understand that all the commandments of the Lord by which we must live are a faithful image of His character, of His way of being; they show us how He lived, they show us His ways. All, absolutely all His commandments, actually represent Him.

Therefore, we cannot neglect any commandment, because the traits of the Lord are found in His commandments. In each of His teachings is hidden a trait of the Lord. Just as in the human embryo all the traits of the one who is to be born are hidden, so are the traits of Lord Jesus hidden in the seed of God. (The seed is the word of God. Luke 8:11)

So if I desire with all my heart to have the traits of His character, then His commandments will be a delight to me, then I will love them. I will joyfully obey as a servant all His commandments and I will become like Him. (Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold. Psalms 119:127; I opened my mouth, and panted: for I longed for thy commandments. Psalms 119:131)

Check yourself! Have you offered to live as a servant, obedient in all things

to Lord Jesus as He did in His relationship with the Heavenly Father? Are the Lord's commandments a delight to you?

Righteousness

Definition of righteousness = objective, fair, impartial, just, and incorruptible. One of the most beautiful character traits of Lord Jesus is **righteousness**. He loved righteousness and hated iniquity. (He... is righteous. 1 John 3:7) The Holy Scripture calls Him the King of righteousness.

If we are attracted and love with all our hearts this character trait of Lord Jesus, which is of perfect beauty, we will be hungry and thirsty for His righteousness and we will desire to live righteously as He lived. (Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Matthew 5:6; But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness. Matthew 6:33)

Those who are born again and are in the Kingdom of God love righteousness and hate iniquity. Thus we have at hand a simple criterion by which we can easily check if we are born again. (If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him. 1 John 2:29)

One of the most important things in the Kingdom of God is righteousness/holiness. (For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Romans 14:17; Holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, for ever. Psalms 93:5)

Citizens of the Kingdom of God do not deceive, do not use gifts/bribes, do not covet and do not take things that belong to others; if they are in school, they do not use cheating, they do not have stolen/pirated software on their computers, they do not take and do not use things from the workplace that do not belong to them. Example: They do not use the car or any of the company's things for personal purposes. (Neither shalt thou desire… any thing that is thy neighbour's. Deuteronomy 5:21)

The Word of Scripture warns us that whoever does not live in righteousness is not born of God. (In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God. 1 John 3:10)

If until now we are not subject to the authority ordained by God, if we do not love the command of Lord Jesus that tells us to give to Caesar what is Caesar's, if we do not delight in it, if we are greedy and do not want to pay our taxes, if we work under the table, if we give bribes at the hospital and in other places, if the television/internet of the world is our food... then we are not attracted to this character trait of Lord Jesus and we do not desire to live as He lived. (Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's. Matthew 22:21)

Check yourself: Are you hungry and thirsty to be righteous in all things? Do you want to live in the righteousness in which Lord Jesus lived?

In conclusion, we can easily observe that in these things in which He lived,

He has called us to live, and we can live as He lived. If we live like this, the Holy Spirit will change us from beauty to beauty after the image of the Lord until we reach the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Only if we live as He lived can His character traits be imprinted in us, namely His righteousness, long-suffering, kindness, love, mercy...

The School of Christ

To have the opportunity to learn to live as the Lord Jesus lived and to grow to the measure of the stature of His fullness, God has provided in His plan the Church, which is the **Body of Christ**. (But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. 1 Corinthians 12:18)

The Holy Scripture describes the Church of Christ as a family, with infants, children, and parents, where we live **in close connection with one another** and grow to become like the Lord.

The one born of God is placed in the family and in the school of Christ, to grow as a disciple until he reaches the stature of a mature man, to the **measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ**. (And he gave some... pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints... till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Ephesians 4:11-13)

In the Church, we learn self-denial, humility, godliness, we learn to offer ourselves as servants to Christ, we learn to live in righteousness as He lived.

It is mandatory to live as He lived because only in this way can His character traits be imprinted in us, namely long-suffering, kindness, gentleness, love... and this can only be done in His school, which is the Church. (He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked. 1 John 2:6)

Upon closer inspection, we can easily notice that all things related to man's salvation, from the new birth until we reach the stature of a mature man, are amazingly similar to the things we encounter in this short life on earth.

At birth, we witness the birth of the child, which is very similar to the new birth in the Kingdom of God.

The natural infant cannot choose in which family to grow up, those from whom he is born will be his family. For growth, the natural infant is fed with maternal milk. All things are absolutely new for the newborn child. He assimilates everything he sees and hears from his parents.

So it is with the one born again, he has spiritual parents who give birth to him through the Gospel. (For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the

gospel. Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me. 1 Corinthians 4:15-16)

The parents of the one born again are those who feed him with spiritual milk as an infant. (And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat. 1 Corinthians 3:1)

He assimilates everything he sees and hears from his spiritual parents. (As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children. 1 Thessalonians 2:11)

A little later, the natural child follows enrollment in school and then, after a while, graduation... In this world, we cannot conceive that you can become a doctor without attending medical school and without teachers.

The same must happen with the spiritual child. You cannot reach the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ without being a disciple in His school. (But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school... Acts 19:9)

God gives us new birth, gives us the Holy Spirit to guide us, places us in His school where we have spiritual parents and teachers, to grow us according to the standard of His Kingdom.

He has given us everything we need to reach the stature for which we were created.(From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. Ephesians 4:16)

This school of disciples has a single purpose, for the disciple to reach the stature of the Teacher. We all must follow this school whose ultimate goal is to obtain the image of His Son in us. (The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master. Luke 6:40)

The Son of God was sent by the heavenly Father to earth to establish the Church, which is the Body of Christ. He is the founder of the school of disciples, of the Church which He lovingly cares for. (And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Matthew 16:18; For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church. Ephesians 5:29)

Lord Jesus had disciples, then He sent them into all the world, so that in turn they would make other disciples and enroll in the school of Christ those who wish to enter this school. (Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. Matthew 28:19-20)

We can take as an example the disciples of the Lord, but especially the apostle Paul. He dedicated his whole life to the service of the Church of Christ. He made

disciples whom he taught to present them before God as perfect disciples in Christ. (Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; t**hat we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus**: **Whereunto I also labour,** striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily. Colossians 1:28-29)

Only in His school can the relationships between disciples be adjusted until they reach full maturity and unity in all things, a unity that will also be found in His eternal Kingdom. (That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us. John 17:21)

God places the members in the Body of Christ similarly to how He placed them in the human body; the heart in its place, the pancreas in its place, the nail in its place, each with its functions. (But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. 1 Corinthians 12:18)

God does not place any member to grow outside the body, because separated from the body it can have neither life nor growth. We take as an example the kidneys, which cannot have life somewhere outside the body. They are in the body, closely connected to other members from which they receive and give further.

So it is with the members of the body of Christ. No member can grow alone, independent of the body. (Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility... and not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. Colossians 2:18-19)

Man must go through various trials so that at the end of the school he may acquire the character traits of Lord Jesus, to be found worthy to dwell with God and with all those who have graduated from this school of disciples and who have His traits imprinted in their character.

We will take as an example long-suffering. How can we have it imprinted in our character?

First, we will learn and assimilate the Lord's teaching regarding non-resistance, then when trials come upon us, we put it into practice by following in the footsteps of our spiritual parents who in turn follow in the footsteps of Lord Jesus. (And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Matthew 5:40-41)

Through this school of patience, which does its perfect work, each of us must pass, because only in this way can we reach the perfection of our character. (My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. James 1:2-4)

Those who are our parents will oversee how we apply the Lord's teaching in

our daily lives. When our rights or what is ours are taken away, we must follow their example and that of the Lord and live as He lived.

Although God's plan is so clear, for most of us the Church, which is the Body of Christ, remains a great mystery, for many the church being just the place where believers gather for worship. (This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Ephesians 5:32)

Through what we see today almost everywhere, we observe that Satan has managed to distort the role of the family, the significance of the Body of Christ. Through the false teaching that "**salvation is limited to the forgiveness of sins**" (a teaching that underlies religious organizations), he has deceived man that there is no need for discipleship and no need for a school of discipleship.

We can easily notice that discipleship to Christ is non-existent in today's religious organizations and almost no one believes that they must live as a disciple to reach the stature of their Teacher.

On the foundation of this false teaching, Satan has managed to deceive man that "the Church" is limited to worship in buildings equipped with preaching halls through which man is given only religious education.

First of all, he worked to replace spiritual **parents/pastors** who are responsible for raising their children, with preaching leaders, with servants dedicated only to worship programs, who are responsible only for institutionalized education and keeping the flock in a scattered form, not at all for raising children. (The wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. John 10:12)

In this way, the Church has become just a center of religious education, thus losing its purpose, no longer being the place intended for the growth and perfection of the saints in which the heavenly dominions look and marvel. (To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. Ephesians 3:10-11)

If we look at today's religious organizations, we can easily see how well Satan has managed to deceive humanity, all practicing this institutionalized system of worship. From Catholics, Orthodox, Lutherans, to neo-Protestant movements, all follow the same pattern of organization, with buildings specially constructed for worship and preaching.

Thus, the one who wishes to live practically the life of discipleship, which involves a child-parent relationship, will find themselves in the ridiculous situation of not finding any spiritual parent. This happens because today in most gatherings spiritual parents are completely absent, as Paul was for Timothy, Titus, and and Onesimus, these being replaced with pastor-preachers, committee members, youth leaders... (Thou therefore, my son, be strong. 2 Timothy 2:1)

Spiritual parents are those who are placed/empowered by the Holy Spirit

to ensure both the growth and protection of the children. (Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. Acts 20:28)

For them to be able to do this, children must obey them in all things. (Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. 1 Peter 5:5)

Submission is described by Scripture as complete obedience without deviation to the right or to the left. (According to the sentence of the law which they shall teach thee, and according to the judgment which they shall tell thee, thou shalt do: thou shalt not decline from the sentence which they shall shew thee, to the right hand, nor to the left. Deuteronomy 17:11)

Only in this way can we reach our perfection, only if we obey our elder in all things. (Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account. Hebrews 13:17; And he gave some... pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints. Ephesians 4:11, 12)

It is good to understand the difference between education and growth under parental authority. Through preaching, we receive only teaching, not parental growth.

We can see how great the difference is when we look at an orphan child and a child who has parents. Both receive education. But for the child who has parents, besides education, they will be there to build his character, to encourage him in good things, and to correct him in what he does wrong. In contrast, for the orphan child, if he does wrong things, there will be no one there to correct him.

We must understand well that we will not be able to grow to reach the stature of the fullness of Christ if we do not have spiritual parents. In Paul's epistles to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon, the Holy Scripture gives us the apostle Paul as an example of a spiritual parent.

Even if Timothy and Titus had a high spiritual stature, apostle Paul still advised and commanded them on how to proceed in spiritual life. (For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. 1 Corinthians 4:15; This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy... 1 Timothy 1:18)

We advise the reader not to wish to be in an institutionalized gathering that practices only worship and preaching, to be solitary, like an orphan child, and thus avoid the Body of Christ which is fitly joined together and compacted.

Let us flee from the gathering that does not practice care and submission; that does not have spiritual parents. There is the work of Satan with which he has deceived the religious world, there is not the Body of Christ.

The work of thwarting God's plan

Satan has used all sorts of tricks throughout history to prevent man from understanding what God's purpose is with him. Where he could not deceive man with indulgences or alms, he came with **faith in the sacrifice on the cross**, emphasizing its role so that salvation is reduced to the forgiveness of sins.

Based on the same doubt he instilled in Eve with the question "Hath God said?" using the fact that there is no man without sin, he worked and instilled doubt in people's minds, convincing them that it is not possible to reach the stature of the fullness of Christ.

He instilled doubt in the hearts of most, deceiving them that the Lord's command which says: "**Be ye therefore perfect**" cannot be fulfilled. (Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. Matthew 5:48)

He worked in such a way that man does not understand God's purpose, so that he does not begin the life of a disciple in the school of Christ.

It would be good for each of us to ask: Does this doctrine of salvation, which is limited to "forgiveness of sins," have a biblical foundation?

To mislead us, Satan has used only part of the truth of Scripture, bringing man only part of the Gospel, just as he used two thousand years ago when he tempted the Son of God in the wilderness. He thus brings us part of God's truth, presenting it as the only truth, convincing that man's salvation is reduced to the forgiveness of sins.

Satan has taken care to remove from God's plan the work of growth and perfection of the saints, deceiving man that for salvation, the perfection of character is not necessary.

He has convinced people that even if they lead a holy and pure life, perfection is not possible (sin cannot be overcome). He has deceived them that even if they pursue sanctification, this may ensure them a reward but will not qualify them for the Kingdom because man cannot be saved except by grace, through mental faith, without works. (For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. Ephesians 2:8)

Through this false teaching, he has abolished discipleship and the importance of the school of Christ (His teachings), deceiving man that these are not part of the plan of salvation. Thus, he has brought man to the point of no longer giving importance to the commandments of Christ and the sanctifying work of the Spirit. (...through sanctification of the Spirit. 1 Peter 1:2)

Thus, in these 2000 years, he has deceived entire generations that perfection is not possible, offering humanity the teaching that salvation consists in the forgiveness of sins.

We can see how well he has succeeded. The majority of those who today bear

the name of Christians stop at salvation without great costs, at the "doctrine of forgiveness of sins."

This is visible when we look at those who believe they are "born again" and who have a failing life of faith. They acknowledge that they do not have victory over sin, that they do not have the fruit of the Spirit, and yet they are convinced that they will have part in salvation through the Lord's mercy because they believed in the sacrifice of the cross.

The great religious organizations – Satan's Empire

On the foundation of this "false doctrine" which convinces man that salvation is limited to the forgiveness of sins, Satan has worked in collaboration with people subservient to him, to create a great religious empire.

He laid the foundations of the great religious organizations, which have transmitted this teaching and have trapped the ignorant masses in their snare.

He has used man's predisposition to obtain what he desires without cost, knowing that he easily gives up the offer that costs him more. So he came with an offer that costs little; you pay indulgences, give alms, or believe in the sacrifice on the cross (that Lord Jesus paid for you) and you get the ticket to heaven.

Thus, for most, Satan's offer is more attractive than God's offer, which has costs. The Lord's offer requires the crucifixion of the flesh and renouncing the world. (Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life. Matthew 7:14)

According to man's predisposition, most are influenced by the cheap offer, the "doctrine of forgiveness of sins," which allows walking on the broad way, this being confirmed by the Holy Scripture. (For wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat. Matthew 7:13)

Whoever wants to look more closely will be able to observe that Satan, like a great merchant, has created a great religious empire to keep people in darkness, so that man does not know the truth about God's plan.

Thus, he has positioned in every country, religious organizations (like supermarket chains) to offer cheap tickets to heaven and has managed to trap billions of people in this snare.

Man, due to ignorance, is thus caught in the net of these religious movements and through belonging to one of them, most often without a personal decision, but because he was born that way (Orthodox, Catholic, Lutheran, Reformed, Jehovah's Witness...), remains under Satan's subordination all his life.

If we look at all these great religious organizations of our days, which were created hundreds of years ago, we can easily see that this great project that Satan

has worked on has succeeded. None of them have in their doctrine this plan of God's perfection, and man, due to ignorance of the Scriptures, remains all his life on the broad way that leads to hell.

To see how great this work of Satan's deception is, we will look a little at this religious empire spread everywhere.

The first great worldwide organization initiated by Satan was Catholicism (today there are approximately 1.3 billion people) which indoctrinated multitudes of people, for entire generations with the teaching that sin cannot be overcome, deceiving them that God's purpose is only the forgiveness of sins and that you can obtain this forgiveness of sins through the payment of indulgences.

By restricting access to the Holy Scripture, which could only be read in Latin, known only by priests, Catholicism kept people in darkness for centuries.

We can also note that Orthodoxy (there are approximately 280 million worldwide) has indoctrinated for hundreds of years with the same teaching, which says that to have eternal life you only need the forgiveness of sins and these can be obtained after death through prayers made for the dead, alms...

And in the Orthodox Church, access to the Holy Scripture was restricted to the common man, being available only in the Slavonic language for hundreds of years.

For about fifteen centuries, Satan managed to hide the Scriptures from the eyes of people and offered the ticket to reach God's Heaven without too high costs, asking only for rituals, through the payment of indulgences, alms...

The incomplete Gospel - A work of deception!

Following the course of history, we observe that with the advent of printing, the Holy Scripture became available in the languages of many nations. By studying it, people began to open their eyes, forcing Satan to find other solutions to deceive man.

Satan was forced to use the Word of Scripture, which he arranged in such a way as to continue to provide cheap tickets to heaven. He brought man an incomplete Gospel through which he managed to deceive, besides Orthodox and Catholics, other multitudes of people. Thus new teachings appeared, all based on the doctrine of forgiveness of sins.

We must note that Satan's main objective was to establish as many religious movements as possible, with as varied teachings as possible, to provide as cheap tickets to heaven as possible and thus catch as many people in his net.

The so-called Reformation of Luther in the 16th century was a first great offer, through which he convinced the ignorant man that he can obtain salvation "just by mentally believing in the Lord's sacrifice." So man no longer needs to pay

indulgences, alms, because someone else paid for him, that being Lord Jesus.

Man was deceived that salvation is reduced only to the forgiveness of sins, this being obtained for free by believing in the sacrifice on the cross, without the payment of indulgences, without the need for works of faith.

As for God's plan to bring us to the stature of the fullness of Christ, to perfection, this was kept hidden from the eyes of people.

Then, as time passed, man knew more and more of the Holy Scripture and could no longer be deceived as easily, so Satan added other offers with "increasingly diversified biblical teachings" on the foundation of which many other religious organizations were formed. These worldwide organizations, having "distinct teachings" from one another, did not modify the "doctrine of forgiveness of sins," with which he deceived the world. We can easily note this if we examine their confessions of faith.

The "more distinct" teachings that differentiate one organization from another have no connection with God's plan, which aims to reach the stature of the fullness of Christ.

God's plan, in which it is foreseen that we all reach the stature of the fullness of Christ, has remained well hidden so that man cannot find the path to perfection. Anyone who looks closely can easily observe that these religious movements, spread all over the world, have an institutionalized organizational system aimed solely at worship, with spiritual fathers being nonexistent. (For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. 1 Corinthians 4:15)

Satan has done everything possible and has succeeded in hiding well the true plan of God. Due to these "so many denominational teachings" that are brought to us, most of us remain in major confusion regarding the life of discipleship that is provided for in the plan of salvation.

Thus, Satan has achieved his goal through the multitude of "religious supermarkets" spread all over the world, which are based only on religious education, thus keeping man away from the real life of discipleship.

Let us sincerely ask ourselves: Is this God's plan? To pay indulgences or to bring offerings or to keep a day? Is this God's purpose? Does He want us to utter a few words in another language, to chase after miracles, or to pronounce the name Jehovah and to search the end times?

Whoever has open eyes will see that these teachings are actually meant to keep us away from the true calling, that of living a life of discipleship to reach the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

The failure of the incomplete Gospel

Today we can see crowds of people who say that decades ago they were "born again" and who do not even think that they must reach the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

This grave deception, which will cost them their lives, happens because God's plan of salvation for them has been limited only to a form of godliness and the forgiveness of sins.

They have been deceived by Satan that the life of a "born again" Christian is characterized by falling, repentance, confession, and again falling into the same sin or sins, and so it will be until the moment of death. And this happens because we are taught that it is not possible for sin to be overcome and in the end, the righteousness of Lord Jesus will be attributed to us.

Many pray to God to overcome a certain sin or more sins (slander, anger, idle words...), and the second or third day, they find that they are again overcome by them. Because in their Christian life they do not have victory over sin (anger, greed...), they cannot believe that it would be possible to live a life similar to that of Lord Jesus, which would lead them to the perfection of their character.

Thus, they have come to the conclusion that this is the true life of the "born again" Christian who, in the end, will reach heaven, but not based on what he lived on earth, but based on the perfect life of the Savior which is credited to his account.

This is the status of the religious man, who preached, taught, spoke in tongues, prophesied, performed miracles, kept a day, but did not believe that God requires him to live a life of full obedience and transformation into the image of the Lord.

However, at the meeting with God, he will have a great surprise. (Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Matthew 7:22-23)

The major failure can be observed in crowds of Christians who believe they are "born again" but when they are on their deathbed, in the last hundred meters, they run to the only option offered by Satan, to the mercy of the Lord for "forgiveness of sins." We see many tormented by the thought that they have not lived in peace with their fellow men, with their brothers in faith, and they seek them to ask for forgiveness.

The failure of this incomplete Gospel, which is limited only to the forgiveness of sins, forces them to search their minds to find sins that remain in their lives, to ask the Lord for forgiveness for them, hoping in His grace and mercy. This happens

because they have not believed and have not worked to reach the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

However, we must remind them that the "doctrine of atonement" offered by Satan, "of salvation which consists only in the forgiveness of sins," carries with it the fear of punishment, because the Scriptures require us to be overcomers of sin. (Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life. Revelation 3:2)

Whoever has not worked to reach the measure of the stature of Christ will have this fear until he closes his eyes. Whoever accepts this deceitful offer cannot have full confidence on the day of judgment.

Only when we reach the measure of the stature of Christ will we have His love, which is perfect, and only this love casts out fear and will give us full confidence on that day. (Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. 1 John 4:17-18)

If the religious organization or assembly (group) we are in does not implement God's plan, if it does not make disciples and does not put them in the school of Christ, with the purpose of growing them to reach the measure of the stature of the fullness of Lord Jesus, but is limited only to obtaining salvation through faith in the sacrifice on the cross, this organization is not from God; it is not the Body of Christ.

We must flee from such an organization that promotes Satan's project with which he has deceived the world. The church is the Body of Christ and was designed by God not to call people to religious programs, but for the growth and perfection of the saints; this is its purpose. (And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints... till we all come... unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Ephesians 4:11-13)

Lord Jesus warns us to search the Holy Scriptures so that we do not stray from God's truth regarding His plan, a plan that provides for the perfection of our character. (Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. Matthew 5:48)

To not be deceived by Satan, we must understand that we are called not only to be forgiven of sins but also to grow as disciples until we reach the perfection required by the status of a brother of Lord Jesus.

Attracted more by the beauty of darkness

We have two offers at our disposal: the beauty of the character of Christ and the Kingdom of God, which involves the crucifixion of the flesh, and the beauty of the kingdom of darkness with the fleeting pleasures of sin.

Most people, when shown how the true Jesus lived, or rather, when shown the beauty of His heart's traits, are not attracted to these "modest traits" and reject them as something to be despised, not interested in imprinting this modest and humbling character, unnoticed, in their character. (But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them... 1 Corinthians 2:14)

Most people remain only with a form of godliness, only with what the Lord did on the cross for them. Lord Jesus calls all people to live as He lived, but people despise the traits of His heart and no one pays attention to them. It is easier to choose the fleeting pleasures of sin and to believe what is preached today, that they are fully forgiven at the cross.

Let us not be deceived, for great will be our disappointment on the day of judgment, the day of God's wrath. (For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness. Romans 1:18)

If, for example, we live in the sin of anger, if anger is still a way of life for us after decades of "repentance," we must understand that we have not been full of admiration for one of the most beautiful traits of His heart, namely, the meekness and long-suffering of Lord Jesus.

Being born again is the beginning of the work of perfection in patience. If we do not love with all our heart, with all our strength, this trait of the Lord's character, God's work of perfection has not begun; we have not yet been accepted as disciples in the school where the patience that Christ had is taught.

All things must be made new, the old things must disappear. (Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. 2 Corinthians 5:17)

Also, if our life is still unchanged regarding righteousness, if we do not admire and love this beautiful trait of Lord Jesus' character, if we are not hungry and thirsty to live in righteousness as He lived, God's work of perfection has not begun.

The Word of Scripture speaks very clearly: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God." (1 John 3:9-10)

If we disregard the authorities that are from God, if we speak evil, both of rulers and others... if we live in the lusts of the flesh, it means that we are still in the old state, where sin is a way of life, not yet being born of God. (Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God. Romans 13:1)

Personal examination

It is good for each of us to examine ourselves in the light of the Word and ask what kind of new birth we have had. Are we attracted to the beauty of the traits of the Lord Jesus? Are we consciously working to change into the image of Christ? Are the fruits of the Spirit's work visible in our lives?

Do we seek the Kingdom of righteousness, peace, and love as a treasure? Do we find ourselves among those who have left the things of the world?

Please be honest with yourself, check where you are at this moment. Your eternity depends on this!

Check yourself: Are you in love with the beauty of Christ's character? Do you want to have it too? Have you made a real covenant of discipleship, of full obedience to Christ? Do you live in righteousness, and is your goal to reach the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ? Are you subject to the authorities ordained by God? Do you avoid paying taxes, do you love the things of the world?

The church is the Body of Christ, it is the school that has in it only disciples of Christ. It was designed by God for the growth and perfection of the saints, this is its purpose. (And he gave some... pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Ephesians 4:11-13)

If you are in an organization that does not aim for real discipleship to resemble Christ, seek a pure assembly, where brothers care for one another and whose goal is the growth and perfection of the saints, so you can grow healthily towards perfection, to reach the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ! (Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. 2 Timothy 2:22)

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If the first man was deceived by Satan and his sin passed upon all, this does not mean that a mistake crept into God's plan. All things happened as foreseen in this plan made in eternity, which God has put in place with great attention to the smallest details.

God begins this work of restoring the image of Christ in man at the moment of being born again and has all the power to bring us to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. (Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Philippians 1:6)

God's plan is not limited to a cheap salvation, which consists only in repentance (putting off the old man) and the forgiveness of sins, but it provides for the restoration of the image of God in us (putting on the new man) and bringing us to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

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